

WAKES COLNE PARISH COUNCIL - YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2020

Internal Auditor's Report on governance and finance

My function primarily is to review the way council operates against nationally accepted standards of good governance. This includes not only control of its funds but also its standing orders and regulations on such matters as risk assessment and employment.

In more usual times I make a point of inspecting the many and varied records of the Council during the year under review. This year Government Regulations restricting our freedom of movement in the battle against Corona Virus, I have not been able conveniently to do this. Instead, I have questioned the Clerk, who is also the Responsible Financial Officer, extensively. Having examined in past years the records maintained on behalf of Council, I remain satisfied that every reasonable step is taken to ensure Parish affairs are professionally carried out and that annual reviews of its policies and procedures are undertaken.

One hidden blessing is that there is no petty cash to track – always a tricky one. The Clerk uses a computer system based on Excel spreadsheets to manage the Council's finances. This has a number of built-in checks and balances pre-programmed specifically for this Council that are designed to show-up any typos and other mistakes at the time of data entry rather than searching for them months later. The result is an end of year summary Statement of Financial Activities is produced that balances at the first attempt and sets out the financial story appropriately for public use, thereby meeting the objective of transparency and financial accountability.

Council's cash reserves at a little over £27,000 remain within the national guidelines, though I have one matter here to which I wish to draw your attention. In May 2019 Council received a grant of £755 to be used on re-painting and other conservation work to the old telephone box and similar heritage items in the parish. During the financial year only £270 of that grant had been used. Therefore as at 31ST March 2020 within the total amount of the Council's funds sits £485 that should be used in accordance with the terms of the donor's, CDC, specific grant aid. I know Council will keep its eye on this.



Coggeshall 10th April 2020